

Additional comments from the United States on the document entitled “Guidelines for the Control of Hazards of Animal Health and Public Health Importance through ante- and post-mortem Meat Inspection.” – OIE TAHC Sep 2005 Report

General Comments:

This document infers that a country’s *Veterinary Services* has ultimate authority over domestic meat inspection services. In many countries, however, it is the nation’s health department that has ultimate authority over meat inspection. Therefore we recommend that the term “*Competent Authority*” (a Codex Alimentarius term) be used in place of *Veterinary Services*.

Specific Revisions:

Page 2, the first paragraph under the Risk assessment section states:

“*Veterinary Services* should utilise risk assessment to the greatest extent possible in the development of sanitary measures. *Veterinary Services* should give priority to addressing microbiological contamination, rather than gross abnormalities detected at ante- and post-mortem inspection, as this has been found to be the most important source of hazards.”

We recommend this paragraph be changed to read:

“*The Competent Authority(ies)* should utilise risk assessment to the greatest extent possible in the development of sanitary measures. *The Competent Authority(ies)* should **also** give priority to addressing microbiological contamination, ~~rather~~ **while not neglecting** gross abnormalities detected at ante- and post-mortem inspection, as this has been found to be the most important source of hazards.”

Page 2, the first paragraph under the Design and management of inspection programmes section states:

“In meeting animal and public health objectives prescribed in national legislation or required by *importing countries*, *Veterinary Services* contribute through the direct performance of some veterinary tasks or through the auditing of animal and public health activities conducted by other agencies or the private sector. To this end, *Veterinary Services* provide assurances domestically and to trading partners that safety and suitability standards have been met.”

We recommend this paragraph be changed to read:

“In meeting animal and public health objectives prescribed in national legislation or required by *importing countries*, *the Competent Authority(ies)* should assess the direct performance of some veterinary tasks or **perform audits** of animal and public health activities conducted by **official government personnel from other government agencies or from government approved personnel from the private sector**. To this end, *the Competent Authority(ies)* provide assurances domestically and to trading partners that safety and suitability standards have been met.”